



RUTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

City Hall – 52 Washington St. – Rutland, VT 05701
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Phone: 802-773-1800

Meeting Minutes January 26, 2022

The meeting was held in person and by teleconference because of the new COVID-19 protocols.

Present: Alvin Figiel (AF), Rebecca Mattis (RM), Pat Griffin (PG) and *David O'Brien (DO).

Also Present: Andrew Strniste Planning & Zoning Administrator, John Ruggiero and Barbara Spaulding recording secretary.

RM, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

- I. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS – None.**
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.**
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 12, 2022.**

AF moved to approve the minutes of January 12, 2022. RM seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- IV. NEW BUSINESS – None.**
- V. OLD BUSINESS – Draft Zoning Bylaws Examples and Test Cases.**

Andrew suggested bringing both PG and DO up to date on the discussions held at the previous meeting.

*David O'Brien arrived.

Those discussions included issues that John Ruggiero had brought to his attention including whether the number of bedrooms instead of units should be considered with the current market for efficiencies and 1-bedroom units; and expanding the Downtown District to allow for multiple units in larger homes. PG said he didn't think this was an issue in the draft zoning and asked what Mr. Ruggiero proposed. Andrew said Mr. Ruggiero was willing to do more research and bring alternative draft language to the Commission for consideration. Andrew added that he was unsure as to whether Vermont allows the ability for municipalities to make regulations based on bedrooms vs. units. He suggested creating a new zoning district or overlay as a possibility to deal with these issues.

AF discussed the on-site parking issues for larger homes near the Downtown and suggested considering an alternative to the proposed parking regulations. PG suggested removing §314.B-E of the Parking Standards beginning on page 83. Andrew is inclined to eliminate the parking requirements except for residential uses.

Andrew reviewed the DRB application for 227 Lincoln Avenue as a test case for the new zoning. The application was to increase the size of an existing deck to allow for respite patients to access the home. The existing 6' x 8' deck was non-conforming due to being entirely in the setback. The new deck was 14' x 9' and under the current zoning the application required DRB review for a permit due to being a non-conforming structure. The Commission discussed the application under the proposed zoning and found that under §108 Exemptions and Limitations, page 9, (14) Accessibility an entry/exit structure would have exempted the project from requiring a permit. Discussion continued on the ambiguity of the language and PG moved to strike "single-or two-unit residential" which essentially will allow ADA compliant structures an exemption from a permit in all districts.

Andrew reviewed the permit application for 234 Columbian Avenue as the next test case. The applicant requested a change of use at the property to a car dealership. The property is located in an Industrial District, and under the current zoning, there are no substantive regulations and the permit was granted. The Commission discussed the application with the proposed zoning under §219 Dimensional Standards (Industrial and Institutional Zoning Districts) on page 40-41. The 13,000 lot does not meet the 20,000-sf minimum lot size. Under §220 Allowed Uses the car dealership is a permitted use with site plan review under 220.D (12) Sales Lot. While the Commission discussed site plan review for the application, the need to determine what constitutes a minor or major site plan review was debated. The application was for interior renovations only. AF discussed how impacts to the community should determine whether a project is major or minor. RM discussed how some of the Industrial District borders residential development. PG suggested examining the Industrial District and how it weaves through the community and whether the district is necessary for the future. DO discussed the potential to the tax base created by industry and asked whether the tax rate is lower in the Industrial District. Mr. Ruggiero said it has been 20-30 years since industry has come to the City. RM suggested revisiting the topic after the Commission has had an opportunity to drive around the district.

Andrew suggested for the next meeting the Commission should start looking at the district areas and minor vs. major site plan review.

AF Asked for a copy of the proposed zoning district map. Andrew said he would make copies for all the Commissioners.

- VI. CORRESPONDENCE** – Vt. Natural Resources Board, 1/13/22, Proposed Land Use Permit Amendment, #1R0477-9 McDonald's Corporation, Woodstock Avenue, reconfigure parking lot for 2 ordering points. DO moved to receive and file. AF seconded. Motion was approved.
- VII. ADJOURN** – DO moved to adjourn. AF seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 7:05 pm. The next regular meeting will be held February 9, 2022.

For the Commission: Barbara Spaulding, Recording Secretary